

Biden announces sanctions against Russian oligarchs, banks

By V. ISACHENKOV/ Y. KAR-MANAU/ A. MADHANI

Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — President Joe Biden announced the U.S. was ordering heavy financial sanctions against Russian banks and oligarchs on Tuesday, declaring that Moscow had flagrantly violated international law by invading Ukraine.

"None of us will be fooled" by Russian President Vladimir Putin's claims about Ukraine, the U.S. President said. And he said more sanctions could be on the way if Putin proceeds further. Biden said he was also moving additional U.S. troops to the Baltic states on NATO's eastern flank bordering Russia. Biden joined the 27 European Union members who unanimously agreed on

Tuesday to levy their own initial set of sanctions targeting Russian officials over their actions in Ukraine.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. AP's earlier story follows below.

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian lawmakers on Tuesday authorized President Vladimir Putin to use military force outside the country — a move that could presage a broader attack on Ukraine after the U.S. said an invasion was already underway there. Several European leaders said Russian troops rolled into rebel-held areas in eastern Ukraine after Putin recognized their independence. But it was unclear how large the deployment was, and Ukraine and its Western allies have long said Russian troops were fighting in the region,



President Joe Biden speaks about Ukraine in the East Room of the White House, Tuesday, Feb. 22, 2022, in Washington.

Associated Press

allegations that Moscow always denied.

Members of Russia's upper house, the Federation Council, voted unanimously to allow Putin to use military force outside the country — effectively

formalizing a Russian military deployment to the rebel regions, where an eight-year conflict has killed nearly 14,000 people. Shortly after, Putin laid out three conditions to end the crisis that has threatened

to plunge Europe back into war, raising the specter of massive casualties, energy shortages across the continent and economic chaos around the globe.

Continued on Page 5

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Biden halts oil, gas leases amid legal fight on climate cost

By **MATTHEW DALY**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration is delaying decisions on new oil and gas drilling on federal land and other energy-related actions after a federal court blocked the way officials were calculating the real-world costs of climate change. The administration said in a legal filing that a Feb. 11 ruling by a Louisiana federal judge will affect dozens of rules by at least four federal agencies. Among the immediate effects is an indefinite delay in planned oil and gas lease sales on public lands in a half-dozen states in the West. The ruling also will delay plans to restrict methane waste emissions from natural gas drilling on



A flare burns natural gas at an oil well Aug. 26, 2021, in Watford City, N.D.

public lands and a court-ordered plan to develop

Associated Press

energy conservation standards for manufactured housing, the administration said. The ruling also will delay a \$2.3 billion federal grant program for transit projects, officials said. A brief filed by the Justice Department late Saturday "confirmed that certain activities associated with (the administration's) fossil fuel leasing and permitting programs are impacted by the February 11, 2022, injunction," the Interior Department said in a statement. "Delays are expected in permitting and leasing for the oil and gas programs." Interior continues to move forward with reforms to oil and gas programs onshore and offshore and "is committed to ensuring its programs account for climate impacts," said spokeswoman Melissa Schwartz. The delays follow a ruling by U.S. District Judge James Cain of the Western District of Louisiana, who blocked federal agencies from using an estimate known as the "social cost of carbon" to assess pollu-

tion from carbon emissions by energy production and other industrial sources. The decision blocked the Biden administration from using a higher estimate for the damage that each additional ton of greenhouse gas pollution causes society. President Joe Biden on his first day in office restored the climate cost estimate to about \$51 per ton of carbon dioxide emissions, after President Donald Trump had reduced the figure to \$7 or less per ton. Trump's estimate included only damages felt in the U.S. versus the global harm previously used by President Barack Obama. The damage figure uses economic models to capture impacts from rising sea levels, recurring droughts and other consequences of climate change and helps shape rules for oil and gas drilling, automobiles and other industries. Using a higher cost estimate would help justify reductions in planet-warming emissions by making the benefits more likely to outweigh the expenses of complying with new rules. "The cumulative burden of the preliminary injunction is quite significant," wrote Dominic Mancini, deputy administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs at the White House Office of Management and Budget. The Energy Department has identified 21 rulemakings that would be affected by the ruling, while the Transportation Department identified nine, the Environmental Protection Agency five and the Interior Department three, Mancini said. Dozens more environmental analyses required by the National Environmental Policy Act also would be affected, he said. □

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Proposal to nix derogatory term targets hundreds of U.S. sites

By **S. MONTOYA BRYAN**

Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)

— Federal officials have come up with a list of potential replacement names for hundreds of geographic features in three dozen states that include the word “squaw,” kicking off a public comment period that will run through late April. U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland in November formally declared the term derogatory and initiated a process to remove the word from use by the federal government and to replace other existing derogatory place names. Haaland said in a statement Tuesday that words matter, particularly as the agency works to make the nation’s public lands and waters accessible and welcoming to people of all backgrounds.

“Consideration of these replacements is a big step forward in our efforts to remove derogatory terms whose expiration dates are long overdue,” she said. “Throughout this process, broad engagement with tribes, stakeholders and the general public will help us advance our goals of equity and inclusion.”

Experts have said the word

“squaw,” derived from the Algonquin language, may have once simply meant “woman,” but over time it morphed into a term used to disparage Indigenous women. Its elimination by the Interior Department is among many efforts nationally to address a history of colonialism and oppression of Native Americans.

The agency is planning three virtual meetings to consult with tribes in March, and written comments will be accepted through April 24. Under Haaland’s order, the first action by a task force made up of officials from several federal departments was to finalize a decision to replace a full spelling of the derogatory term with “sq----” for all official related communications. It also will be up to the task force to prioritize the list of replacement names and make recommendations to the Board on Geographic Names before it meets later this year. As part of the process, the U.S. Geological Survey came up with five candidate names for each feature. The list includes more than 660 sites in New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, California, Idaho and many other states.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Board on Geographic Names took action to eliminate the use of derogatory terms related to Black and Japanese people. Over the past two decades, the board has received 261 proposals to replace geographic features with squaw in the name, according to the Interior Department. The board also voted in 2008 to change the name of a prominent Phoenix mountain from Squaw Peak to Piastewa Peak to honor Army Spc. Lori Piastewa, the first Native American woman to die in combat while serving in the U.S. military. The Arizona Senate recently passed a memorial asking the federal government to replace the names of



Interior Secretary Deb Haaland speaks at the Cherokee Immersion School Friday, Dec. 3, 2021, in Tahlequah, Okla.

Associated Press

geographic features in the Grand Canyon region with Native American names to promote an understanding of and appreciation for the “unique and significant cultures and heritage of the Grand Canyon’s

tribal peoples.” Lawmakers in that state also are considering a measure that would require the Arizona Board on Geographic and Historic Names to rename anything that includes the word squaw. □

High court takes case involving refusal to serve gay couples

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a new clash involving religion and the rights of LGBTQ people in the case of a Colorado web designer who says her religious beliefs prevent her from offering wedding website designs to gay couples.

The high court said Tuesday it would hear the case of Lorie Smith. The Denver-area designer offers graphic and website design services and wants to expand to wedding website services, but she says her Christian beliefs would lead her to decline any request from a same-sex couple to design a wedding website. She also wants to post a statement on her website about her beliefs. Doing those

things, however, would run afoul of a Colorado anti-discrimination law. Smith had argued the law violates her free speech and religious rights.

The Supreme Court said in taking the case that it would look only at the free speech issue. It said it would decide whether a law that requires an artist to speak or stay silent violates the free speech clause of the First Amendment. The case is expected to be argued in the fall.

Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser said the Supreme Court has consistently held that anti-discrimination laws like the one in his state apply to all businesses selling goods and services. □



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Helicopters crash near Utah ski resort in training accident

By **SAM METZ**

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) —

Two Blackhawk helicopters crashed within a few hundred yards of a Utah ski resort Tuesday morning during a training exercise as skiers on a nearby lift watched a huge cloud of snow billow into the air.

Amazingly, none of men and women aboard the helicopter or the dozens of skiers nearby were injured, authorities said. Utah National Guard spokesman Jared Jones said that the crash occurred during a standard training exercise on U.S. Forest Service land just outside the boundaries of Snowbird Ski Resort, about 28 miles (47 kilometers) from Salt Lake City.

Joseph Schafer, a 23-year-old from Provo, heard the thud. He said it sounded similar to the blast noise from the explosives ski patrols set off to control avalanches, but realized it was a crash when he saw a helicopter's rotor fly out of the cloud of powder. He was thankful nobody was seriously hurt, but said skiers like him were sad when the resort closed lifts and trams near the crash site.

Other skiers and snowboarders taking advantage of post- Presidents Day weekend's fresh snow and



In this photo provided by @LifterMike93 is the scene where a pair of Utah National Guard helicopters were involved in an accident near Snowbird Ski Resort in Snowbird, Utah on Tuesday, February 22, 2022.

Associated Press

clear skies said they also heard the boom and saw dust emanating from the crash site below their chairlift.

Noah Sikorski, an 18-year-old skier from Cottonwood Heights, said he saw the helicopters go down at a flat area that's often used for snowmobile lessons. Though the landing at first appeared controlled, he said he was alarmed when he saw debris hurling toward the chairlift he was on. He later saw four crew

members in National Guard uniform lugging a stretcher with gear and equipment strapped on.

Jani Radebaugh, another skier from Provo, said she and her husband saw the helicopters flying close to the ground in what looked like a formation. The couple turned around after the helicopters disappeared into the dust their rotors had kicked up, but then were jolted upon hearing a "womp."

"All I could see is a big,

long, straight object flying from there — maybe 100 or 150 yards away from there," Radebaugh said of the propeller blade.

When the dust settled, she saw a flipped Blackhawk in the snow.

Kaia Shine, an 8-year-old from Steamboat Springs, Colorado, who was skiing with her father and sister also saw broken propeller blades in the wreckage. "I saw a rotor fly off, and it was scary because it just started twisting around in

the air," she said. Snowbird is known as one of the nation's premier ski and snowboard destinations because of ample snowfall and the variety of terrain. The two UH-60 helicopters crashed near Mineral Basin, a normally windy canyon on the backside of the resort known for its expert terrain.

Jones said it was routine for pilots in train to land in difficult areas regardless of weather conditions to prepare for combat, but rare for them to crash. He did not provide information on the cause of the crash but said efforts were underway to investigate the incident and to remove the damaged equipment from the mountainside.

"We do train on the edge so that we're ready for a combat environment anywhere in the world. The crews assume some level of risk. Every time you go fly a helicopter, there's a little bit of danger involved. I'm just happy everyone is OK," he said.

The crash comes about a year after two similar helicopter crashes. In January 2021, a UH-60 Blackhawk crashed during a training exercise and killed three in New York. The following month, a similar crash killed three in Boise, Idaho. □



This file image provided by the Maryland U.S. District Attorney's Office shows a photo of firearms and ammunition that belonged to Christopher Paul Hasson, a Coast Guard lieutenant.

Associated Press

By **MICHAEL KUNZELMAN**

Associated Press

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (AP) —

A federal appeals court Tuesday upheld a prison sentence of more than 13 years for a former Coast Guard officer accused of

stockpiling weapons and plotting politically motivated killings inspired by a far-right mass murderer.

Christopher Hasson argued the district court judge who sentenced him in January 2020 improperly applied a

Sentence upheld for Coast Guard officer tied to terror plot

"terrorism enhancement" that more than tripled the recommended range of a prison term under federal sentencing guidelines. Hasson was not charged or convicted of a terrorism-related offense.

A three-judge panel of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected Hasson's argument, saying he failed to demonstrate that the sentencing judge legally or factually erred in applying the enhancement.

In a separate but similar case, the 4th Circuit ruled that a defendant does not need to be convicted of a federal crime of terrorism for the enhancement to be

applied. It applies "when-ever a defendant's offense of conviction or relevant conduct was 'intended to promote' a federal crime of terrorism," the panel noted in its ruling for Hasson's case. U.S. District Judge George Hazel sentenced Hasson to 13 years and four months in prison after he pleaded guilty to possessing unregistered and unserialized silencers, being a drug addict in possession of firearms and illegal possession of tramadol, an opioid painkiller.

Justice Department prosecutors called Hasson a domestic terrorist who appeared to be planning

attacks inspired by the manifesto of Anders Behring Breivik, the Norwegian far-right terrorist who killed 77 people in a 2011 bomb-and-shooting rampage.

Prosecutors claimed Hasson drew up what appeared to be a computer spreadsheet hit list naming House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer and Democratic presidential hopefuls, including Sen. Elizabeth Warren. He also mentioned several network TV journalists, including MSNBC's Chris Hayes and Joe Scarborough and CNN's Chris Cuomo and Van Jones. □

EU forum puts crucial Indo-Pacific region squarely on radar

By MASHA MACPHERSON

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Foreign ministers from Indo-Pacific nations attended a Paris conference Tuesday aimed at bringing the region, an important partner for trade and exports, squarely into Europe's focus in a rapidly changing world with rising security challenges.

New Zealand, India, South Korea, Japan and a clutch of other Asian nations were represented at the forum. China was not invited.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian stressed that China was not being slighted, and EU Foreign Policy chief Josep Borrell noted the long-standing

"dedicated dialogue" between the EU and China.

"The Indo-Pacific strategy ... is not an anti-China strategy. This strategy is not against anyone," Le Drian said at a closing news conference. "It is a strategy for partnership development between the Indo-Pacific and the European Union." Le Drian listed "concrete projects" that he said were planned or underway, from tackling climate change to health, but also security concerns.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell called the region an "aorta" for Europe with 40% of the EU's trade passing through the region's waters.

"That's why we need freedom of navigation ... a security architecture that we have to build together," Borrell said.

He announced a just-launched coordinated maritime presence with the region's navies.

It is "not a military alliance, not against anyone. It's a way of enhancing our presence and coordinating our means among the member states in order to be more able to act," he said, without further elaboration. Le Drian acknowledged concern over an emerging alliance between Russia and China "which is clearly defying the multilateral order."



French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, left, and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell, right, discuss as they attend the Indo-Pacific Ministerial Cooperation Forum as part of the French EU Council Presidency in Paris, Tuesday, Feb. 22, 2022.

Associated Press

"And that was another reason for us to engage more in the Indo-Pacific," the French minister said. □

Biden announces sanctions against Russian oligarchs, banks

Continued from Front

Putin said the crisis could be resolved if Kyiv recognizes Russia's sovereignty over Crimea, the Black Sea peninsula that Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014, renounces its bid to join NATO and partially demilitarizes. The West has decried the annexation of Crimea as a violation of international law and has previously flatly rejected permanently barring Ukraine from NATO.

Asked whether he has sent any Russian troops into Ukraine and how far they could go, Putin responded: "I haven't said that the troops will go there right now." He added coyly that "it's impossible to forecast a specific pattern of action — it will depend on a concrete situation as it takes shape on the ground."

Biden scheduled an address for later Tuesday, but Germany made the first big move. It took steps to halt the process of certifying the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from Russia — a lucrative deal long sought by Moscow but criticized by the U.S. for increasing Europe's reliance on Russian energy. The rest of the European Union soon followed, with a first set of sanctions aimed at the 351 Russian lawmakers who voted for recog-



Russian President Vladimir Putin signs a document recognizing the independence of separatist regions in eastern Ukraine in the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, Monday, Feb. 21, 2022.

Associated Press

nizing separatist regions in Ukraine, as well as 27 other Russian officials and institutions from the defense and banking world. They also sought to limit Moscow's access to EU capital and financial markets.

With tensions rising and a broader conflict looking more likely, the White House began referring to the Russian deployments in the region known as the Donbas as an "invasion" after initially hesitating to use the term — a red line that President Joe Biden has said would result in the U.S. levying severe sanctions against Moscow.

"We think this is, yes, the

beginning of an invasion, Russia's latest invasion into Ukraine," said Jon Finer, principal deputy national security adviser, said on CNN. "An invasion is an invasion, and that is what is underway."

The Biden administration's rhetoric hardened considerably in less than 24 hours. The White House announced limited sanctions targeting the rebel-region Monday evening soon after Putin said he was sending troops to eastern Ukraine. A senior Biden administration official, who briefed reporters about the sanctions targeting the breakaway region, noted "that Russia

has occupied these regions since 2014" and that "Russian troops moving into Donbas would not itself be a new step."

The administration initially resisted calling the deployment an invasion because the White House wanted to see what Russia was actually going to do. After assessing Russian troop movements, it became clear it was a new invasion, according to a U.S. official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

Western leaders have long warned Moscow would look for cover to invade — and just such a pretext ap-

peared to come Monday, when Putin recognized as independent two separatist regions in eastern Ukraine, where government troops have fought Russia-backed rebels. The Kremlin then raised the stakes further Tuesday, by saying that recognition extends even to the large parts now held by Ukrainian forces.

Putin said Russia has recognized the rebel regions' independence in the borders that existed when they declared their independence in 2014 — broad territories that extend far beyond the areas now under separatist control and that include the major Azov Sea port of Mariupol. He added, however, that the rebels should eventually negotiate with Ukraine. Condemnation from around the world was quick. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he would consider breaking diplomatic ties with Russia and Kyiv recalled its ambassador in Moscow.

But confusion over what exactly was happening in eastern Ukraine threatened to hobble a Western response. While Washington clearly called it an invasion, some other allies hedged.

"Russian troops have entered in Donbas," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said in Paris. "We consider Donbas part of Ukraine." □

Israeli probe finds no sign of police abuse in spyware case

By JOSEF FEDERMAN

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — An Israeli investigation found “no indication” that police illegally hacked the mobile phones of dozens of public figures, the Justice Ministry announced Monday, contradicting the key claims of a series of explosive investigative reports in a leading Israeli newspaper.

Israel’s attorney general ordered the investigation last month in the wake of the unsourced reports by the Calcalist business daily, which said police spied on politicians, protesters and even members of former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s inner circle, including one of his sons.

The paper said police used Pegasus, a controversial spyware program developed by the Israeli company NSO Group, without obtaining a court warrant. In its announcement, the Justice Ministry said the investigation led by the country’s deputy attorney general found no evidence to support the claims.

“There is no indication that police deployed Pegasus



A logo adorns a wall on a branch of the Israeli NSO Group company, near the southern Israeli town of Saphir, Aug. 24, 2021.

software without a court order against people on the list published in the media,” it said, adding that NSO and government security experts assisted in the probe. The investigation found that police received authorization to spy on the phones of three of the people on the list, but only one was successfully infiltrated. It said investigators looked into the use of a second

type of spyware used by police and also found no signs of wrongdoing.

The Calcalist reports prompted a public uproar. The current prime minister, Naftali Bennett, said the allegations were “very serious,” and Netanyahu, who is on trial for alleged corruption, demanded a “strong and independent investigation” while trying to cast doubt on the charges

against him. The country’s public security minister, who oversees the police force, has also formed a high-level government commission of inquiry. Police officials, both former and current, have denied any wrongdoing.

Those denials, along with the lack of evidence uncovered so far, have begun to draw scrutiny on Calcalist’s reports. Its re-

porter, Tomer Ganon, has stood by his work. Over the weekend, he said he would continue to protect his sources.

“I risked my good name not because of naivety, but because I checked the facts,” he wrote on Twitter. Pegasus is a powerful tool that allows its operator to infiltrate a target’s phone and sweep up its contents, including messages, contacts and location history. For NSO, which has faced mounting criticism over Pegasus, Monday’s report was a rare piece of good news. It said it hoped the conclusions “will result in reporting that no longer relies upon misinformation and political organizations issuing biased and prejudiced reports.” NSO has been linked to snooping on human rights activists, journalists and politicians in countries ranging from Saudi Arabia to Poland to Mexico to the United Arab Emirates. In November, the U.S. Commerce Department blacklisted the company, saying its tools had been used to “conduct transnational repression.” □

Associated Press

Colombia’s highest court legalizes abortion up to 24 weeks

By MANUEL RUEDA

Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Colombia became the latest country in Latin America to expand access to abortion Monday as the nation’s Constitutional Court

voted to legalize the procedure until the 24th week of pregnancy.

The decision by the tribunal of nine judges fell short of the expectations of pro-choice groups that had been pushing for abortion

to be completely decriminalized in Colombia. But it was nevertheless described as a historic event by women’s rights groups, which estimate 400,000 women get clandestine abortions in the country each year. Before the ruling, Colombia allowed abortions only when a woman’s life was in danger, a fetus had malformations or a pregnancy resulted from rape.

Now women in Colombia will be able to get abortions until the 24th week of their pregnancy without having to provide any justification. After the 24th week of pregnancy, abortion will still face restrictions. “We were trying to get the complete decriminalization of abortion ... but this is still a historic step,” said Cristina Rosero, a lawyer for the New York-based Center for Reproductive Rights,

an advocacy group that was one of five organizations that filed a lawsuit in 2020 to get the high court to review Colombia’s abortions laws.

The lawsuit argued that restrictions on abortion discriminated against women from low income areas for whom it was harder to get legal abortions, because they had less access to doctors, lawyers or psychologists who could help them to prove that carrying out pregnancies would put their health at risk.

Rosero said the changes made to Colombian law will now make it easier for people of lower income levels to access safe abortions.

“Our challenge now is to ensure that this ruling is implemented” she said. Elsewhere in Latin America, Argentina, Uruguay and

Cuba also allow abortions without restrictions until certain stages of pregnancy, while in Mexico a supreme court ruling recently said that women cannot be tried in court for terminating their pregnancies. Latin America is also a region where some countries prohibit the termination of pregnancy without exception, like in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

In Colombia, where a majority of the population identifies as Roman Catholic, abortion has long been a controversial issue. Judges met several times to review the lawsuit filed by women’s rights groups without voting on it.

Meanwhile pro-choice groups waving green flags, faced off against pro-life protesters dressed in blue. □



Abortion-rights activists celebrate after the Constitutional Court approved the decriminalization of abortion, lifting all limitations on the procedure until the 24th week of pregnancy, in Bogota, Colombia, Monday, Feb. 21, 2022.

Associated Press



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West trains Africa forces as coastal nations fret attacks

By SAM MEDNICK

Associated Press

JACQUEVILLE, Ivory Coast

(AP) — While patrolling a mock village to train in fighting extremists, a Ghanaian soldier wondered how he would cope if one day the drill became real. The 24-year-old special forces officer, who has never experienced war, is part of a select group of African soldiers being trained by Western armies to combat surging jihadi violence across the Sahel, a vast expanse below the Sahara desert, that is now spreading south into coastal states.

Huddled in a circle after the reconnaissance exercise at the training site in Ivory Coast, the officer said he has watched neighboring countries be overrun by jihadis for nearly 10 years. The soldier, whose identity is kept anonymous according to security regulations, is among less than 200 troops from four West African nations being led in exercises as part of the annual U.S. military-led counterterrorism training known as Flintlock.

This year's exercises take place as France announces it will be pulling its troops from Mali, where thousands of its soldiers have been fighting Islamic extremists since 2013 when they pushed al-Qaida linked fighters from strongholds in the north. Despite their presence, attacks have increased and spread within Mali and into neighboring Burkina Faso and Niger, killing thousands and displacing some 2.5 million people. Extremists have made their way to the coastlines before. In 2016 extremists attacked the resort area of Grand Bassam in Ivory Coast, killing at least 19 people. After targeted



Ghanaian special force soldiers taking part in the annual U.S. Military led counterterrorism training known as Flintlock, patrol under the supervision of British soldiers near base camp Loubila, Jacqueville, Ivory Coast, Wednesday Feb. 16, 2022.

anti-terrorism measures, the country did not see attacks for some years. But Ivory Coast and Benin have recorded 25 attacks since 2020. There is also now a reported presence of al-Qaida and Islamic State group-linked cells in northern Ghana which has seen violence surge near its border since August — 19 attacks compared to almost none the two years before — according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project.

"As these insurgencies continue to spread, the more difficult it becomes to contain them and the less likely it is that the conflict will end in the foreseeable future," said Heni Nsaibia, senior researcher at the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project.

Sahel experts say some coastal militaries, like Ghana and Ivory Coast, are somewhat better equipped and capable at stemming the jihadi threat, but many still lack basic skills and have never faced battle. During the first week of Flintlock held at Ivory

Coast's International Counter Terrorism Academy, a new \$65 million complex partly funded by France to train soldiers across the continent, Western trainers said a lot of people didn't know how to check a pulse or use a tourniquet.

The international community has spent years trying to shore up ill-equipped and undertrained regional militaries to fend for themselves, but it's been challenging. The region has been overrun by coups, including in Mali and Burkina Faso, both of which were spearheaded by soldiers who participated in some international training opportunities.

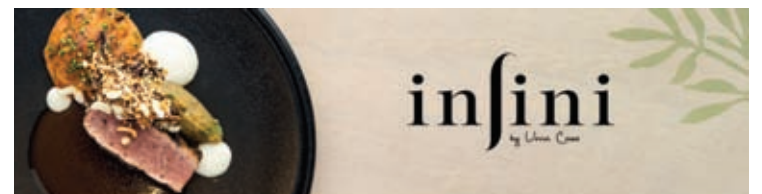
Both countries, which have been hardest hit by jihadi violence, were barred from attending Flintlock this year since the U.S. is unable to provide military support to countries overthrown by coups. "It's a bit of a tragedy because it's really like they're shooting themselves in the foot when it comes to assistance from the United States," said Rear Adm. Jamie Sands,

rica. African armies have said trainings like Flintlock are a good opportunity to learn from international and regional partners. This year however, the number of people attending was cut by a third and only four African nations participated: Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Niger. Senegal pulled out of hosting it due to the coronavirus pandemic, forcing some countries to cancel.

As France pulls out of Mali, it's unclear if other countries will fill the gap. The United States said it will not increase its military footprint but will likely be in the region for a long time. The U.S. is particularly concerned about al-Qaida's approach of trying to integrate into society. □

Associated Press

Commander for Special Operations Command Af-



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The Central Bank of Aruba raised the reserve requirement rate by one percentage point as of February 1, 2022, to reduce commercial banks' excess liquidity



ORANJESTAD — During its meeting of January 12, 2022, and after reviewing the most recent economic and monetary data, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Centrale Bank van Aruba (CBA) decided to raise the reserve requirement rate from 13.0 percent to 14.0 percent as

of February 1, 2022. This decision was primarily based on the elevated level of excess liquidity at the commercial banks.

The following information and analysis were considered in reaching this decision:

International reserves

International reserves (including revaluation differences of gold and foreign exchange holdings), up to and including December 24, 2021, increased by Afl. 757.2 million compared to the end of December 2020. The notable expansion in the international reserves was mostly the result of net inflows of foreign exchange reserves attributed to tourism services and loans from the Government of the Netherlands provided to the Government of Aruba (GoA) for liquidity support. Meanwhile, official reserves increased by Afl. 521.0 million. Consequently, the official and international reserves reached, respectively, Afl. 2,728.9 million

and Afl. 3,113.8 as of December 24, 2021

Credit developments

In November 2021, total credit of the commercial banks contracted by Afl. 145.1 million or 3.7 percent to Afl. 3,819.0 million, when compared to the end of 2020. This decline was caused by the categories 'other' (-Afl. 83.7 million/-16.3 percent), 'business loans' (-Afl. 32.4 million/-2.1 percent), and 'loans to individuals' (-Afl. 29.0 million/-1.5 percent). The fall in the category 'other' was primarily the result of a lower amount of government bonds held by the local commercial banks. The drop in the category 'loans to individuals' was due to a decrease in 'consumer credit', while the category 'business loans' was for the most part impacted by diminished current account loans.

Inflation

In November 2021, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose by 3.1 percent compared to the corresponding month a year earlier. The twelve-month average inflation rate amounted to 0.2 percent in November 2021, 0.5 percentage point higher than the previous month (Graph 2). The rise in the CPI compared to a year earlier was mainly caused by the upward price movements in the components 'transport' (1.8 percentage points contribution) and 'housing' (0.5 percentage point contribution). The former was related to the trending oil price hike that coincided with a higher gasoline price, while the latter was due to rising prices of maintenance and repair of the dwelling. The

higher prices for maintenance and repair of housing dwellings may have been related to the ongoing global supply shortages.

Commercial bank liquidity

The aggregate excess liquidity of commercial banks rose to Afl. 1,295.8 million in November 2021, compared to Afl. 1,107.4 million in December 2020 (Graph 3).

The monthly comparison showed that the aggregated excess liquidity remained unchanged in November 2021 in contrast to October 2021, despite a one percentage point increase in the reserve requirement on the 1st of November 2021.

The uptick in the reserve requirement rate was mitigated by a surge in the total liquid funds held by the commercial banks. Consequently, the level of excess liquidity remained unchanged and significantly above pre-pandemic levels.

The ample excess liquidity is partly the result of the continued subdued credit demand at local commercial banks. Furthermore, the wage subsidy and FASE programs of the GoA to cushion the economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis also contributed to the high level of excess liquidity.

Meanwhile, the prudential liquidity ratio of the commercial banks, which measures the percentage of their liquid assets to their total net assets, remained at a comfortable level of 37.9 percent in November 2021, far above the minimum required prudential liquidity ratio of 18.0 percent. □

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Skip & Winnie Speed became Aruba's "Honorary Emerald Ambassador" after 35 years of continue visits

ORANJESTAD - It have been 35 years ago when Skip and Winnie decided to come to Aruba for the first time and fall in love with our island and since then became their second home.

Over the years they made so many friends that are now more than family here in Aruba. They have seen the up rise of Aruba and so many come and go as they say but they are still strong coming to Aruba every year. This year they will be coming 2 more time and already do have their reservation done for next year. This couple brought many of their friends and families over the years to Aruba and the list continue grow-

ing every year. Skip is also an ordained minister and did some vow renewal on our amazing beaches. Winnie celebrated her 83th birthday at Red Parrot Restaurant surrounded by many friends that came to wish her all the blessings in the world. Our gratitude to this couple and all they have done for our island of Aruba and wishing them all the best and congratulation for this amazing title as "Emerald Ambassador" of Aruba. They will be coming back this July and also in October so they will maintain their nice island tan. ☐

Photos by SteveFrancees.com



Honoring at Divi All Inclusive



EAGLE BEACH - Recently, Aruba Tourism Authority representative Marouska Heyliger had the great pleasure in honoring many loyal Aruba visitors with their distinctive certificates. These certificates are a way to say "Masha Danki" for continuously choosing Aruba as a favorite vacation destination. The titles are as following: 10+ years "Distinguished Visitor", 20+ years "Goodwill Ambassador" and 35+ years "Emerald Ambassador".

The honorees are: **Clarence and Winifred Speed** from New York. They

have been honored as Emerald Ambassadors because they have been coming to the island for their 35th consecutive year.

They love coming back to the island for its beautiful beaches, friendly people and sunny weather.

Heyliger together with the representatives of the Divi All Inclusive presented the certificates to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home. ☐

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Article by Etnia Nativa

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Manaure of the Caquetios

Manaure was our legendary great chief of the South-Western Caribben and North-West main land area, what today is Venezuela. A great strategist and strong nation warrior statesman. He lived in a very large town called Todariquiba, located nearby the banks of a river by the name of Rio Mitare, in Northwestern Venezuela. This Mitare River flows through a dry Paraguana xeric scrub ecoregion*, dividing then into the Pedregal and Paraíso rivers which empties both into the gulf of Coro in the Caribbean.

Native legends mentions Manaure as an intelligent and brave person, who upon obtaining the position of Cacique, was conferred legal, magical and of spiritual convictions, he was the only one to hold such important type of chiefdom compared to what was common in those days in Europe. He was carried in special made hammock throne litters by his warriors. He was described as having an overwhelming personality, impeccable conduct, inordinate power of shrewd understanding and strong character. He recognized in those times as a "man of his word" because what he said he did. He wrote his name in history, as he was one of the few indigenous monarchs (caciques) in South America to negotiate with the Spanish colonization in the early 16th century. Manaure came into contact with the Spaniards around 1523 through his Vassal Caciques, who informed Juan Martín de Ampíes, who was in Aruba at the time, of the interest in peace negotiations for the mutual agreement of the two parties in the region. Thus, through his emissaries, Manaure established an alliance with Ampíes. Ampíes had to suffer in his own flesh, the sale of slaves and indigenous people among



merchants from Santo Domingo. In this situation, 150 of the indigenous people and some relatives of Manaure found themselves kidnapped to be sold as slaves in 1525. Thanks to the diplomatic relations between the two parties, Ampíes managed to rescue, together with his agent, a good number of indigenous people, including all the relatives of Manaure.

Grateful, Manaure sealed the first alliance, than later Baptized by Ampíes with the name of "Martín" and thus followed by the Foundation of the City of Santa Ana de Coro in Venezuela - on July 26, 1527 in the name of the Spanish Catholic Crown. This area has been an enormous productive trade zone long before old world colonization started. But the good relations with the Spanish would soon end when King Charles the V in 1528, faced with the debts he had contracted with the German bankers, Breached his contractual agreement with Manaure and decided to cede the



Episode CXLIII - 143



administration of the province to the Welser House of Augsburg, things turned sour. Augsburg who had no respect for the already existing alliance appointed a new governor a few years later, Ambrosio Alfinger, who initiated an important indigenous depopulation massacre in the province. This was also the end of all prosperity in the region.

The Germans seize canoes and all that were property of the nation and that of Manaure, who, upon claiming them, is imprisoned. While Ampíes was expelled and stripped of all his position, he would later return to Curaçao and Aruba in support of Manaures campaigning. Some time later, Manaure was released and forced to leave for some (250-300 km) away from Coro, taking refuge with his family. He started a gerilla campaign against the Germans who all ready had mercenaries on his search. He was ambushed and executed one site in 1549 in one of the numerous battle against the Conquistador mercenaries, in what is now the City of El Tocuyo. □

About Etnia Nativa

Our goal is to raise cultural awareness, promote education and safeguard our heritage as the sacred mother seed guiding you to be the next guardian of the island. If you love Aruba its origins and its cultural heritage, be part of the exclusive visitors of this cozy home-atelier called "Etnia Nativa". This private residential houses collections of native art, archaeological artifacts and historic furniture, while the facilities themselves are the result of the transformation of recycled materials. Meet this acclaimed columnist, artist and native cultural expert at home! Book your visit Whatsapp + 297 592 2702- or mail: etnianaativa03@gmail.com



Millennial Money: A financial checklist to quit your job

By **KELSEY SHEEHY**
of **NerdWallet**

Burnt out? Over it? Ready for a change?

Millions of people are quitting their jobs each month in what many have dubbed the "Great Resignation."

Before you join the mass employment exodus, do a thorough scan of your financial situation.

That means, of course, taking a hard look at your spending habits and any savings you've accumulated — you need at least a little cover to get you from one job to the next.

It also means taking inventory of everything your employer currently subsidizes. Things like health care, retirement savings, commuter benefits and stock options, which you may surrender when you exit.

"People know they're walking away from a paycheck," says Eric Roberge, a certified financial planner and founder of Beyond Your Hammock, a financial planning firm in Boston. "But they often forget to consider their benefits packages." Use this financial checklist to make sure you don't leave any money on the table when you leave your job.

— **USE YOUR FSA:** Flexible spending accounts don't move with you from one job to the next. You typically need to use the funds before you resign or lose that money altogether.

With health care FSA accounts, you can use the full amount elected, even if you've only contributed a portion when you leave. With dependent care accounts, you can use what you've contributed up to your final paycheck.

Most FSA plans offer a grace period, allowing you to submit claims after you leave. But you'll be reimbursed only for eligible expenses that occurred on or before your last day, so stock up on cold medicine, hand sanitizer and ibuprofen before calling it quits.

There is one exception: If you opt for COBRA coverage (more on that below), you may be able to keep



In this Nov. 15, 2017, file photo, new \$1 bills with the signatures of U.S. Treasurer Jovita Carranza and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin are cut and stacked at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Washington.

Associated Press

your health care FSA. If you go this route, you'll continue to make contributions, plus pay any FSA and COBRA administration fees.

— **SPEND ANY UNUSED COMMUTER BENEFITS:** Did you make pretax contributions to pay for parking or public transportation? Use those funds before your last day or you might lose them forever.

— **GET CHECKUPS, REFILL PRESCRIPTIONS:** If you have health insurance through your employer, take care of any routine medical appointments (and non-routine things you've been putting off) before your insurance runs out.

When your employer-provided plan will end depends on your employer, though it's typically either on your last day or at the end of the calendar month in which you left.

— **INVESTIGATE VACATION, SICK LEAVE:** Companies differ on how they handle accrued vacation and sick time. Some will cut you a check for any unused va-

cation when you leave. Others will pay out a set number of hours (up to 20 hours, for example). With others, you forfeit any unused time when you quit. Find out what your employer's policy is before putting in your notice and use up any time you won't be paid for when you quit. You've earned your vacation and sick days, so don't leave any time or money behind.

— **SIGN UP FOR HEALTH INSURANCE:** Don't risk going uncovered while between jobs. Evaluate your health insurance options and choose a plan that works for you.

You may also have the option to continue your employer insurance but pay the full premium, for up to 18 months via the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, better known as COBRA. You can also jump on your spouse's plan or sign up for a new one through the health insurance marketplace. (Quitting your job is considered a qualifying life event.)

— **RESEARCH YOUR 401(K) FEES:** Make sure you're well versed on the plan options with your employer's 401(k), as well as any fees associated, so you can decide what to do with your account when you leave.

You may choose to leave your 401(k) where it is, but that should be an intentional choice, not the default. If you have a new job lined up, you can roll it into your new employer's plan (if it offers one).

"Pay attention to fees in each 401(k) and the different investment options to decide where it makes sense to keep your money," says Elliott Appel, founder of Kindness Financial Planning in Wisconsin. "Another option is to roll it into an IRA, where you can choose the investments and minimize costs."

— **LEARN YOUR VESTING SCHEDULES:** Some companies use a vesting schedule to dole out benefits like stock and retirement plan contributions. Leave the company before you're 100% vested and some — or all — of that money

could go back to your employer.

Before you turn in your notice, find out whether you're fully vested. If you're not, take note of your next vesting milestone and how much money you'll forfeit if you leave before that date. "It's imperative to know what you might be leaving on the table so you can weigh the cost versus benefit," says Ashlee deSteiger, founder of Gunder Wealth Management in Michigan. You may opt to stay another week, month or year to gain full ownership of your vested benefits. □

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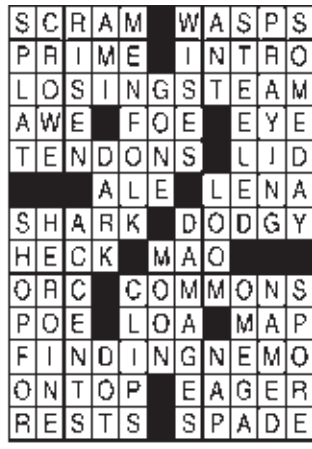
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 42 Bygone
1 Dagger part6 Apertures
10 Picture puzzle
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13 Draw out
14 Jail cell15 Sampled
16 Pitching stat
17 Cereal bit18 Hosp. parts
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DOWN

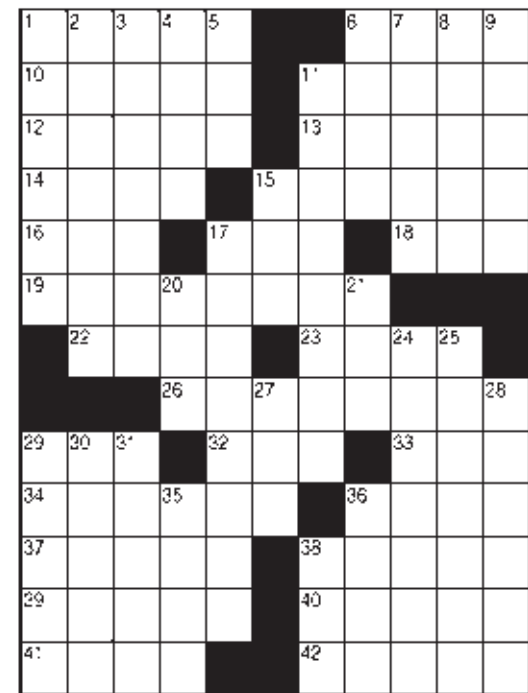
1 Prepared for impact
2 "Smiley's People" author3 John Adams's wife
4 Slacker address5 Snaky shape
6 Mount Olympus group7 Keen
8 Indiana player
9 Luges11 Included in the cast
15 Eastern "way"17 Like some detergents
20 CPR pro
21 TV's24 Crude book-marks
25 Eastern sight
27 McKellen title28 Mountain passage
29 Main ideas
30 Lead-in problem31 Laundry group
35 Fraternal group
36 Stepped on

38 Common title word



Yesterday's answer

15 Eastern 28 Mountain
"way" passage
17 Like some 29 Main
detergents ideas
20 CPR pro 30 Lead-in
21 TV's 31 Laundry
Danson problem
24 Crude 35 Fraternal
book-group
marks 36 Stepped
25 Eastern on
sight 38 Common
27 McKellen title
of "X-Men" word

A X Y D L B A A X R
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-23 CRYPTOQUOTE

Z D H L X I C D E Q H J H I P H Z D I
F Q H Y K F Q R H Q R D F L X I C F Q H
X I C J Q I U H R D F R X I C F Q H
Y K F Q R H Q R D F L R D H X F Q H

— Q . D . B Q F L R

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: TRUTH IS, EVERYONE IS GOING TO HURT YOU. YOU JUST GOT TO FIND THE ONES WORTH SUFFERING FOR. — BOB MARLEY

Beekeepers using tracking devices to protect precious hives

By DAISY NGUYEN

Associated Press
WOODLAND, Calif. (AP) —

For a few frenzied weeks, beekeepers from around the United States truck billions of honeybees to California to rent them to almond growers who need the insects to pollinate the state's most valuable crop. But as almond trees start to bloom, blanketing entire valleys in white and pink flowers, so begin beehive thefts that have become so prevalent that beekeepers are now turning to GPS tracking devices, surveillance cameras and other anti-theft technology to protect their precious colonies. Hive thefts have been reported elsewhere in the country, most recently three hives containing about 60,000 bees taken from a grocery chain's garden in central Pennsylvania. They happen at a larger scale and uniquely in California this time of year because bees are most in

demand during the largest pollination event in the world.

In the past few weeks, 1,036 beehives worth hundreds of thousands of dollars were reported stolen from orchards statewide, authorities said. The largest heist involved 384 beehives that were taken from a field in Mendocino County, prompting the state beekeepers association to offer a \$10,000 reward for information leading to their recovery.

"It's hard to articulate how it feels to care for your hives all year only to have them stolen from you," Claire Tauzer wrote on Facebook to spread the word about the reward. A day later, an anonymous tipster led authorities to recover most of the boxes and a forklift stolen from Tauzer's family business some 55 miles (88 kilometers) away, at a rural property in Yolo County. One suspect was arrested. □

Casa del Mar 2BR/2B

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Week 8/1409 (18k);
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'Wendy Williams Show' ending, new Sherri Shepherd show ahead

By LYNN ELBER

AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "The Wendy Williams Show" will end because of Williams' prolonged health-related absence and be replaced this fall with a show hosted by Sherri Shepherd, the producer of both TV programs said Tuesday.

The new daytime show, crisply titled "Sherri," will "inherit" the time slots on Fox owned-and-operated stations that have been the backbone of Williams' nationally syndicated talk show since 2008, producer and distributor Debmar-Mercury said.

"Since Wendy is still not available to host the show as she continues on her road to recovery, we believe it is best for our fans, stations and advertising partners to start making this transition now," company co-presidents Mort Marcus and Ira Bernstein said in a statement.

"We hope to be able to work with Wendy again in the future, and continue to wish her a speedy and full recovery," the executives said. They also expressed their "great love and affinity for Wendy" and admiration for her success.

The company declined to comment further on her recent health issues, which Williams herself has not discussed other than in generalities. In a statement, Williams spokesman Howard Bragman said it's been a "challenging time" as she



Sherri Shepherd appears at the Los Angeles premiere of "Mr. Iglesias" on June 20, 2019, left, and Wendy Williams appears at the world premiere of "The Morning Show" in New York on Oct. 28, 2019.

Associated Press

deals with her health and is grateful to Debmar-Mercury, Shepherd and others who have supported her show. Williams knows "the reality of syndicated television -- you can't go to the marketplace and sell a show that's the 'Maybe Wendy Show,'" Bragman said, and understands the decision from a "business point of view."

Reflecting the company's statement, he said Williams has been assured that if her health rebounds — and she wants to host again — "she would be back on TV at that time." For Debmar-Mercury, the stability represented by Shepherd is espe-

cially important as changes in daytime TV near. Ellen DeGeneres' long-running talk show ends this season, leaving its viewers in search of alternatives. The field already includes Drew Barrymore and Kelly Clarkson-hosted shows, with one led by Jennifer Hudson reportedly set for fall.

"OMG! I am so excited to have my dream come true and debut my very own talk show" in New York, actor-comedian Shepherd, a former co-host of "The View," said in a statement. "Sherri" will combine her love of "pop culture, talk, entertainment and comedy," she said.

"The Wendy Williams Show" has relied on a string of guest hosts, Shepherd among them, since the start of its 13th year last fall. Built on Williams' popularity as a brash radio host, the show has been a success for Lionsgate-owned Debmar-Mercury.

Shepherd proved the most popular sub for Williams, Debmar-Mercury said, and the show's ratings held up during her appearances. Production will continue on "The Wendy Williams Show" through the current season, with rotating fill-in hosts, including Shepherd.

She is the "perfect choice" for her own show and has

already proven her appeal to the Fox audience, said Frank Cicha, an executive vice president with Fox Television Stations. He thanked Debmar-Mercury for navigating "an extremely trying situation."

She is an executive producer for "Sherri," along with her producing partner Jawn Murray and David Perler, the latter having worked as executive producer for all but one season of "The Wendy Williams Show."

Williams last taped her show in July 2021, when season 12 wrapped. Production on the current season was delayed last September because she had a "breakthrough" case of COVID-19, the show said at the time. Reasons for her continuing absence were not subsequently detailed.

Williams' health didn't intrude on her TV work until 2017, when she fainted during the show and took a three-week leave. Williams said in 2018 that she had been diagnosed years before with Graves' disease, an autoimmune condition that affects the thyroid. She has been blunt about her life, saying her longtime cocaine use that began in college made her a "functioning addict" before kicking the drug. However, on a March 2019 episode of her show, a tearful Williams said that she was living "in a sober house" and had a round-the-clock sobriety coach. She didn't specify why. □



This combination photo shows cover art for the children's book "Maya and the Beast," left, and a portrait of author and surfer Maya Gabeira.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — One of the world's greatest big-

wave surfers, Brazil's Maya Gabeira, has embarked

Surfer Maya Gabeira has book deal with children's publisher

on a kid-friendly adventure.

The seven-time winner of the World Surf League Big Wave Award has a deal with Abrams Children's Books for two picture stories and a young adult memoir. The first picture book, a fairy tale of "big waves and even bigger courage," titled "Maya and the Beast" and illustrated by Ramona Kaulitzki, comes out Aug. 2.

"It's been a dream of mine to share my story with children, in my own words, for a long time," Gabeira said in a statement Thursday. "'Maya and the Beast' is based on my own story: from a shy, asthmatic child to world record holder in the male-dominated sport of big wave surfing." Gabeira's memoir, currently untitled, is scheduled for 2023. According to Abrams, the book will fea-

ture "as-yet-untold stories of the friendships, relationships, and personal challenges she encountered on the road to becoming one of surfing's elite athletes."

The 34-year-old Gabeira is credited by Guinness World Records for surfing the highest wave ever by a woman, more than 73 feet in Nazaré, Portugal in 2020. □

American women players settle suit vs U.S. Soccer for \$24M

By **ANNE M. PETERSON and RONALD BLUM**
AP Sports Writers

U.S. women soccer players reached a landmark agreement with the sport's American governing body to end a six-year legal battle over equal pay, a deal in which they are promised \$24 million plus bonuses that match those of the men.

The U.S. Soccer Federation and the women announced a deal Tuesday that will have players split \$22 million, about one-third of what they had sought in damages. The USSF also agreed to establish a fund with \$2 million to benefit the players in their post-soccer careers and charitable efforts aimed at growing the sport for women.

The USSF committed to providing an equal rate of pay for the women's and men's national teams — including World Cup bonuses — subject to collective bargaining agreements with the unions that separately represent the women and men. "For our generation, knowing that we're going to leave the game in an exponentially better place than when we found it is everything," 36-year-old midfielder Megan Rapinoe said during a telephone interview with The Associated Press. "That's what it's all about because, to be hon-



United States women's national soccer team member Alex Morgan, left, listens as teammate Megan Rapinoe speak to reporters during a news conference in New York, Friday, May 24, 2019. Associated Press

est, there is no justice in all of this if we don't make sure it never happens again."

The settlement was a victory for the players, who sparked fans to chant "Equal Pay!" when they won their second straight title in France in 2019. And it was a success for USSF President Cindy Parlow Cone, a former player who became head of the federation in March 2020.

Cone replaced Carlos Cordeiro, who quit after the federation made a legal filing that claimed women had less physical ability and responsibility than

male counterparts.

"This is just one step towards rebuilding the relationship with the women's team. I think this is a great accomplishment and I'm excited about the future and working together with them," Cone said. "Now we can shift the focus to other things, most importantly, growing the game at all levels and increasing opportunities for girls and women." U.S. women have won four World Cups since the program's start in 1985, while the men haven't reached a semifinal since 1930. Five American stars

led by Alex Morgan and Rapinoe began the challenge with a complaint to the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in April 2016. Women sued three years later, seeking damages under the federal Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. The sides settled the working conditions portion in December 2020, dealing with issues such as charter flights, accommodations and playing surfaces. They were scheduled to argue on March 7 before the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in an attempt to rein-

state the equal pay portion thrown out by a U.S. District Court. "The settlement announced today is an important step in righting the many wrongs of the past," the union for the women's team said in a statement.

While a labor contract remains to be reached and ratified to replace the deal that expires March 31, the settlement was an enormous step. "It's so gratifying to feel like we can start to mend a relationship with U.S. Soccer that has been severed for so many years because of the discrimination that we faced," said Morgan, a 32-year-old forward. "To finally get to this moment feels like we can almost sigh a breath of relief." Players were able to set aside the legal distractions to continue on-field success. "The additional hours and stress and outside pressures and discriminations we face, I mean sometimes you think why the hell was I born a female?" Morgan said. "And then sometimes you think how incredible is it to be able to fight for something that you actually believe in and stand alongside these women. ... There was something more than stepping on the field and wanting to be a starter or wanting to score goals or wanting to win or wanting to have the glory." □

Locked out MLB players meet with owners for 2nd day in a row

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP Baseball Writer
JUPITER, Fla. (AP)—

Locked out baseball players and team owners were meeting for the second day in a row Tuesday in an attempt to reach an agreement that would salvage opening day on March 31.

The talks on the 83rd day of the second-longest work stoppage in baseball history marked only the second time since the lockout began that bargaining on core economic issues has taken place on consecutive days. The sides also

met on Jan. 24 and 25.

MLB has told the union an agreement is needed by Monday for the season to start on time.

Players have not said whether they accept that as a deadline.

Negotiations were shifted this week from New York to Roger Dean Stadium, the spring training home of the Miami Marlins and St. Louis Cardinals.

On Monday, MLB increased its offer of a bonus pool for prearbitration players by \$5 million to \$20 million, upped its pro-

posal from three to four for teams participating in an amateur draft lottery and dropped its request for flexibility to decrease domestic minor league contracts along with a plan to limit optional assignments to five per player each season.

The union wants a \$115 million bonus pool, eight teams in a draft lottery and a maximum four optional assignments.

The players and teams are far apart on luxury tax thresholds and rates. The teams have told the union



Signs are posted outside Roger Dean Stadium in Jupiter, Fla., Monday, Feb. 21, 2022. Associated Press

they will not increase salary arbitration eligibility, will not decrease revenue sharing and will not add new methods for players

to accrue service time, which players said are needed to prevent teams from holding players back to delay free agency. □

Start this year's vacation with this amazing experience in the heart of Costa Linda Beach Resort

Water's Edge Restaurant is a jewel many had the pleasure to find!

Palm Beach – When you think of a restaurant that pleases the needs of a whole family or a large group of people with all different tastes? Think Water's Edge Restaurant. Located at the shore of Aruba's most wonderful beach, The Eagle Beach Aruba. Water's Edge Restaurant is guaranteed to serve you a fantastic magical night to remember. Whether you prefer to enjoy the view from indoors air conditioned comfort, outdoors in the soft tropical breeze or under a palapa with your toes in the sand. This spectacular restaurant offers the best ocean view sunset or sky full of stars dinner while the crispy Caribbean night wind caresses your face and plays with your hair.

From the minute you arrive there will be a great staff welcoming you with the most contagious smiles and warmth. The intense menu with a great variety of appetizers, main courses and delicious desserts will not disappoint. Seafood, Steaks and international favorites. All on one menu specially made just for you.

Culinary Voyage

Start your gastronomic journey with a scrumptious appetizer such as the Maryland Crab Cakes, maybe the Crispy Calamari or the mouthwatering creamy Garlic Tarragon Shrimp. You can also opt for a classic French Onion Soup, a Lobster Bisque or the famously Water's Edge House Wedge, a crisp wedge of fresh romaine lettuce topped with homemade blue cheese dressing, diced tomatoes, chopped bacon, caramelized pecans and blue cheese crumbles, drizzled with balsamic reduction. This followed by the



Chef's special of seafood such as Fresh salmon filet seasoned and grilled, topped with lemon cilantro butter and served with homemade mashed potatoes and fresh asparagus, a nice plate of Ahi Tuna or a succulent pasta dish like the Florentina Fettuccine Alfredo. Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of a devourable 22oz. Bone-In "Tomahawk" Rib-Eye, pan seared in garlic infused oil and finished in the oven or our juicy N.Y Strip Loin, seasoned & grilled. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi glace, mushroom sauce, or bacon blue cheese butter. For extra sides the options are delectable. Fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, mashed or baked potatoes, fries or rice and beans. Combine your personal choice with one of the most exclusive wine from the great selection of international wines to compliment your dish. Kids will enjoy every item of the

specially compiled kids menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests. To end the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness, the desserts are wild. From a piece of coconut flan, NY cheese cake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

Creating memories

If you are planning a birthday dinner, here you will receive a nice bottle of champagne to take home with you to extend your experience even further whether on the beach or your own private balcony.

Live entertainment

Just about every day of the week, there is a different live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, there is absolutely a night especially for you where you can combine

great music with delicious cocktails mixed with concoctions. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Whether you join us for breakfast, lunch or dinner, Water's Edge Restaurant & Bar offers a relaxed and inspirational dining experience overlooking the beautiful Eagle Beach with spectacular ocean views. Gather with friends and family for drinks and appetizers or a night of pampering and relaxation.

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To reserve your table please call +297 583-8000 / ext 8106 or direct line +297 586-9494

For more information about the menus, entertainment and hours, please visit the website watersedge-aruba.com

"Water's Edge Restaurant is where magnificent beach views, amazing food and excellent service come together."



Thank you to all our guests

From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to Thank all of our guests who showed us so much love and support all through 2021, and hopefully will continue to do so in 2022. What we are most grateful for is that we could get back to doing what we love, which is looking after our guests. So, thank you for every dinner, lunch, breakfast, very to-go order, every glass of wine, every birthday, anniversary and date-night that you spent with us this last year. To our new guests, Welcome! We hope you to see you back soon! ☐

